



U.S. Department of Justice
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NEWS RELEASE

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Nov. 4, 2004

FORMER AIRPORT SCREENER PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING CASH FROM PASSENGER BAGGAGE

WICHITA, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced today that **Chad Butler**, 33, Wichita, Kan., has pleaded guilty to one count of theft of cash by an airport screener. Butler entered the plea Nov. 3 before Magistrate Judge Karen M. Humphreys in U.S. District Court in Wichita.

Butler was indicted Aug. 25, 2004 by a federal grand jury in Wichita. In his plea, he admitted that he stole \$500 cash from the baggage of a Delta Airlines passenger on June 16, 2004 at Wichita Mid-Continent Airport. Butler took the money while he was supposed to be conducting a security check of the passenger's carry-on luggage. At that time, Butler was working as an airport screener for the U.S. Transportation Security Administration.

Sentencing is set for Jan. 14, 2005. Butler faces a maximum of one year in federal prison, without parole, and a \$100,000 fine.

Melgren commended the work of the U.S. Transportation Security Administration in the investigation and Assistant U.S. Attorney Lanny Welch in the prosecution of the case.

“Airline passengers should be able to trust themselves and their personal possessions to the care of airport screeners who are trained and paid to protect the public,” Melgren said. “In the overwhelming majority of the time, that trust is honored. When that trust is violated, however, we will not hesitate to vigorously investigate and prosecute the offenders.”